



**146th Airlift Wing
Office of Public Affairs
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For Immediate Release

Air Force in fight against wildfires

CHANNEL ISLANDS AIR NATIONAL GUARD STATION, Calif. — Eight Air Force C-130 Hercules cargo airplanes equipped with the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System, or MAFFS, are assisting in the wildland fire-fighting effort, operating from this base 60 miles northwest of Los Angeles.

By the end of flight operations Wednesday aircraft and airmen had logged 48 sorties and 32 flying hours, dropping 129,600 gallons of retardant on the Simi Fire.

The California Air National Guard's 146th Airlift Wing began aerial fire-fighting operations Monday, after being activated late Saturday.

Airmen, aircraft and equipment from three additional Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units began arriving and fighting fires Tuesday.

The three units are:

145th Airlift Wing, North Carolina Air National Guard, Charlotte, N.C.

153rd Airlift Wing, Wyoming Air National Guard, Cheyenne, Wyo.

302nd Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve, Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

The MAFFS mission at this base is being managed through a joint effort of the USDA Forest Service, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the California Air National Guard.

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MAFFS is a self-contained, reusable 3,000-gallon system that enables the C-130 to drop fire retardant and limit the spread of fires. Forest Service lead planes are assigned to assist the C-130s. Each fire orders retardant drops according to their fire suppression needs, and the military aircraft fill those orders through a dispatch from the Southern Operations Coordination Center in Riverside, Calif.

The MAFFS program is a joint program of the Department of Defense and the USDA Forest Service. Two of the Forest Service-owned modular systems are prepositioned with each of the four wings, allowing the Air Force to provide the additional airtankers to civilian forestry and fire protection agencies when needed during periods of high fire activity.

For more information contact 2nd Lt. Julio J. Bermejo at (805) 479-1050 or (805) 986-7496 or MAFFS Public Information Officer Joe Fassler at (707) 599-6551.

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